

Informal Transcript of Dr. Markus Kitchens September 20, 2022 call to NBME
CS0290118
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- NBME: Good afternoon, National Board. May I have you verify your name for me please.
- Examinee: Yes, this is Marcus Kitchens.
- NBME: Thank you so much. Which examination can I help you with?
- Examinee: Yes, I am calling -- I'm trying to actually call about a score recheck on, the status of it.
- NBME: Okay.
- Examinee: I haven't received an email. I sent it back in on the 30th of August, but I haven't received anything confirming that you guys have received my documents or anything.
- NBME: Okay. Umm, What is your ID, let me see your ID number. Okay. So, you sent it to ECFMG. So, you sent it to ECFMG and they forwarded over to us?
- Examinee: No. I sent it directly to -- I faxed it over to you all.
- NBME: No. You could not have faxed it to us here at the National Board because we don't accept score rechecks faxed. Does ECFMG accepts score rechecks faxed?
- Examinee: I guess I did it through IMG. I'm not quite sure. The only thing I do know is I went on the website and it had a number there that I could have faxed it to and I did that.
- NBME: What number was that?
- Examinee: Let's see. Yes, it is 1-2-1-5-3-8-6-3-1-8-5.
- NBME: Yeah, that's not our number. That sounds like it may be ECFMG's number when it's ECFMG's numbers. Cause I'm looking at my database here at the National Board of Medical Examiners because of course we're not your registering entity, but ECFMG when they have score rechecks from their examinees, they intake them first and then they will forward them over to the scoring department. But I don't see anything in my information about a score recheck. I think maybe I should forward you down to ECFMG and let them look in their system for you because I --
- Examinee: Can I ask?
- NBME: It's two different companies. Yeah. Go ahead.

Examinee: Right, yes. And that's what I'm trying to really -- I guess I'm fully trying to understand, I mean, as an American citizen going with ECFMG and NBME. How are you guys -- I thought you guys were like the same company.

NBME: We're not. We're not the same company. We are two different -- actually, there's three companies that all administer a portion of the USMLE exams. For the USMLE exams, that's the name of the exams, it's not a company name.

Examinee: Right, yes Ma'am.

NBME: It's the name of the exam (United States Medical Licensing Exam). So, if you're an internationally educated doctor ...

Examinee: Yes

NBME: 'cause your citizenship doesn't really matter,

Examinee: Right

NBME: It depends on where you were educated. Okay.

Examinee: Okay.

NBME: So, if you're an internationally educated doctor then you would go through ECFMG to apply for the USMLE exam. If you were educated here in the United States or Canada then you would apply to us here at the National Board for the USMLE examination. And once you have bypassed the Step 1 and the Step 2 examinations and you are then advanced enough to go to the Step 3 exam, the Federation of State Medical Boards handles everyone for the USMLE exam.

Examinee: Gotcha.

NBME: So, it's just three different companies that handle a different portion of the application process for the USMLE exam.

Examinee: Okay, and now when I -- another question that I have for you is that on the website -- because when I recently took Step 1 and also Step 2. Very confident, pretty excelled in my studies, etc. and when I received my score back, it was almost as if I made like a zero percent which was completely unheard of and so I was very, which I was really taken back from. So, my question is that on the website it says that it is very -- that you guys don't even change scores or like if you do the score recheck that things it won't be changed or that there won't be an error or that it never has been.

NBME: Okay. So, my understanding of what the USMLE website says and I'm not sure what ECFMG's site -- I'm not sure what site you were looking on, but...

Examinee: Yes, it was USMLE's.

NBME: It is true that it is very unlikely that a score will change. I have been here a little over 12 years at the National Board ...

Examinee: Congratulations

NBME: I have not known, thanks, I have not known a score to change as a result of a score recheck. I have never seen that happen.

Examinee: Really?

NBME: So, I think that is probably what the website is alluding to because there are so many QC checks involved with the scoring area that they have to go through before they release a score that, you know, it's highly unlikely that, you know, a score recheck would result in, you know, a score being changed. Now, technically a score recheck can be done for any examination and it could affect you positively or negatively. You know, your score can go up or it can go down as a result of a score recheck

Examinee: Right

NBME: But it's very unlikely that a change will be made. I've never seen it happen in all the time that I've been here.

Examinee: Gotcha. Okay. I do understand that. I was just -- I'm just very taken by, when I did receive those scores back which is, you know, on the exam I was very confident that -- I didn't think the exam was actually that hard for me and then when I look at the score, it's almost like a zero percent, like in the low 20th percentile, which I mean, I did all of my work at Mayo Clinic for god's sake, you know. So, I haven't been...

NBME: Wow.

Examinee: I am the top of all of these things in research, etc. so that's -- and even my mentors and directors, even Johns Hopkins is not understanding this as well.

NBME: Well, I don't really have an answer for that of course. There's just no way for me to be able to respond to that.

Examinee: Gotcha. Okay. Do you guys have an external...

NBME: Again, a score recheck...

Examinee: Is it externally rechecked or internally rechecked?

NBME: Well, there is a scoring department that works, well physically is in the NBME building but the scoring department scores a lot of different examinations, not only these USMLE examinations but others. So, they are physically in the same building as we work out of but they're independent. They don't, you know, take

customer calls. They don't take, you know, any kind of correspondence. They work independently. So, when they put their information out ...

Examinee: Yes Ma'am

NBME: They do so in the form of a notification email to all of us, you know, even though technically we're in the same building but they work independently of us all. So, that's why, you know, when you have a score recheck request from a ECFMG registrant, it has to go to ECFMG first so that they can document it and then the managers at ECFMG are the ones who forward it over to the scoring department directly for it to be scored and for it to be returned back to them because they are the ones who are responsible for ...

Examinee: Right

NBME: Contacting their registrants directly.

Examinee: Gotcha. Okay.

NBME: So, that's where I think that you need to go. You need to speak to ...

Examinee: Yes

NBME: Someone at ECFMG and confirm ...

Examinee: Yes Ma'am

NBME: Whether or not they received your fax and, you know, what the status of it is. Okay?

Examinee : Yes Ma'am. Thank you so much. It's been a very stressful event for me for sure.

NBME: Absolutely.

Examinee: I'm very taken from this. So, I'm trying to figure out what my next steps are going to be when it comes down to recheck.

NBME: Well, let me have you hold for a moment and I will forward your call down to ECFMG to see if someone in their customer service unit is able to give you more information on the status. Okay?

Examinee: Thank you so much ma'am.

NBME: Hold one moment for me. You are very welcome.

Examinee: Yes Ma'am.

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